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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 COLOMBO 000970

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR D, SA, SA/INS, EUR/NB, EAP/J  
NSC FOR E. MILLARD  
LONDON FOR POL/RIEDEL

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [EAID](#) [CE](#) [NO](#) [JA](#) [IN](#) [LTTE](#)

SUBJECT: GSL looks forward to Tokyo and hopes for big impact; Tigers' apparent non-participation casts shadow

Refs: Colombo 960, and previous

(U) Classified by Ambassador E. Ashley Wills.  
Reasons: 1.5 (b, d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: The GSL is looking forward to the Tokyo donors conference, hoping for a big impact both politically and financially. That said, the Tigers' apparent non-participation is casting a bit of a shadow. The Norwegians plan to be represented in Tokyo by development officials. India may be represented by its ambassador to Japan. On the financial side, donors are gearing up to make fairly robust pledges. Although original expectations for Tokyo are down somewhat due to the Tigers, the conference is set to provide crucial support for the next phase of the peace process. END SUMMARY.

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On to Tokyo  
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2. (C) The Sri Lankan government is looking forward to the June 9-10 Tokyo donors conference, hoping for a big impact both politically and financially. In a conversation with Ambassador Wills on June 5, Minister Milinda Moragoda, a key assistant to Prime Minister Wickremesinghe, said the government hopes that Tokyo will provide "a fresh impetus" to the peace process. In addition, the government hopes that it will obtain the "political, moral and financial support" needed to carry on. Moragoda also said that he hoped Tokyo would send the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) "a message that their foot stomping and immature behavior" will not be rewarded. (Note: See Paras 8-9 for the prime minister's comments on the Tigers' apparent non-participation in Tokyo and their June 4 letter.) (Note: Late June 5, the Ambassador also held a brief meeting with Moragoda. A brief readout of this meeting was sent to SA and SA/INS in an unclass e-mail. Among other matters, Moragoda again stressed the importance of using the conference to underscore international support for the peace process. In reference to the Tigers' latest demand -- see more below, Moragoda said the GSL could support formation of an interim administration in the north/east, but only as part of a well-scripted process and only after confidence is restored.)

3. (C) With respect to the financial side (see more on pledges in Para 12), Moragoda told the Ambassador that he hoped donors at Tokyo would favor what he called a "lockbox" approach to pledging. By this, he said he meant that they would express their pledge and say the money would be put in a metaphorical lockbox. That lockbox would be unlocked when the LTTE rejoined the process in a constructive way, he remarked.

4. (C) Re the U.S. message at Tokyo, Moragoda commented that the peace process was a bit "amorphous" at the moment. He hoped that Deputy Secretary Armitage in his remarks will "emphatically state that Sri Lanka needs a process, a road map, a new direction and milestones" so that the peace attempt reacquires direction. He kept returning to this point throughout the conversation. Moragoda also suggested that the two sides need to be reminded of the goal they agreed to at the Oslo conference in November 2002, namely their joint support for formation of a federal structure in a united country. Moragoda added that there was no need for the U.S. to get into nitty gritty issues, such as the military's "high security zones" in Jaffna and whether the GSL has moved fast enough to withdraw its troops in that area.

5. (C) Re earlier reports that President Kumaratunga would do a video message to be shown at the conference, Moragoda said it appears she will not/not do it. Moragoda said that might change, however. (Note: Presidential spokesman Harim Peiris told us on June 5 that the president would definitely not be doing a video and had no plans for involvement in the conference. He

said the president and the PM might be meeting before the latter's departure for Tokyo, but that meeting might be put off. In his meeting late June 5 with the Ambassador, Moragoda confirmed that, in the end, the president had indeed decided not/not to do the video feed.)

16. (SBU) On other aspects of the conference, Moragoda said Norway will serve as a co-chair and will be represented either by the minister or deputy minister of development cooperation. (Note: See comments of Norwegian polchief in Para 10. Also, see comments in Para 11 re possible Indian representation.) In the meantime, the European Union would be represented by Guy Legras, External Affairs Commissioner Chris Patten's deputy. Moragoda said he had just heard that Canada will be represented at below the political level and will hold back some of their total pledge until the Tigers rejoin the whole process.

17. (SBU) Closing on an operational note, Moragoda said he planned to meet with the four co-chairs (Japan, Norway, the EU, and the U.S.) at the conference hotel at 4:00 P.M. on Sunday, June 8. He would then meet with other officials who were coming to the conference (ambassadors, representatives of multilateral organizations and international financial institutions, etc.) at 5:00 P.M. the same day. (Note: Ambassador Wills plans to attend both of these meetings, in addition to one with representatives of European countries at 2:00 P.M. on June 8.) (Note: We have e-mailed to SA/INS a tentative list of Sri Lankan government participants at the Tokyo conference.)

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Tigers' probable absence casts Shadow  
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18. (C) While there are still high hopes for Tokyo, the apparent non-participation of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) is casting a bit of a shadow. This is especially the case given the Tigers' pointed June 4 rejection of the GSL's latest offer re assistance delivery modalities for the north/east. (Note: In its latest exchanges with the GSL, the LTTE has not actually mentioned Tokyo. The group, however, has given no indication that it plans to reconsider its late April decision not to go. Despite entreaties from a group of European envoys visiting the LTTE-controlled Wanni region on June 4, for example, the Tigers reportedly would give no commitment on going to Tokyo -- a fax has been sent to SA/INS with information about this visit. The Tigers' June 4 letter, mentioned above, is reviewed in detail in Reftel. Also, see Septel containing local media reaction, which focuses on the Tigers' letter. End Note.) In a meeting late June 4 with visiting Deputy USAID administrator Schieck and the Ambassador, PM Wickremesinghe seemed in a very pensive mood regarding the peace process, noting that he did not expect the LTTE to be present at Tokyo. Queried about the LTTE's June 4 letter, the PM said the negative response from the Tigers was something the GSL fully expected at this point. The prime minister did not indicate how or when the GSL intended to reply to the group.

19. (C) In another conversation late June 4, polchief found Bradman Weerakoon, a close adviser to the PM, also in a pensive mood. In comments similar to those we have picked up from other government officials, Weerakoon said he believed that Tokyo would have a very positive impact, but he clearly felt disappointed that the LTTE -- at its very own choice -- was apparently not going to be there.

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Norwegian, Indian Representation in Tokyo  
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110. (C) Regarding his government's role at Tokyo, Norwegian Embassy polchief Tomas Stangeland confirmed Moragoda's comments that the GoN would be represented by development officials. There would be political-level representation, but at a lower level with Ambassador to Sri Lanka Hans Brattskar and some other MFA officials present. Because Norway wanted to maintain its position as a "neutral" facilitator (given that the Tigers appeared not to be participating), neither Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgesen nor Special Envoy Erik Solheim would be in Tokyo. Stangeland related that the GoN had originally thought that it would try to avoid being seen as one of the sponsors of the conference if the Tigers did not participate (this, in the interests of appearing more "neutral"). The Norwegian government, however, had in the end decided to serve as one of the co-chairs, he said.

¶11. (C) With respect to India, Taranjit Sandhu, Indian High Commission polchief, told us that it was possible that the Indian ambassador to Japan would participate in the conference. India, however, did not want to attend if the Tigers were there, and it was still not clear exactly what the LTTE planned to do. With the LTTE apparently not participating, however, Sandhu thought that possibly cleared the way for India to attend.

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Expected Pledges  
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¶12. (C) Re the financial side, donors are gearing up to make fairly robust pledges. Mission has surveyed the donor community and collected the following information on level of representation and, where available, likely pledges (Note -- Some of the information on representation was already flagged above):

-- Japan: Prime Minister to make an opening statement, Foreign Minister to attend.

-- EU Commission: DG of External Affairs Guy Legras.  
Pledge: 20 million Euros.

-- EU Presidency: Director of Asian Office, Greek MFA.  
Individual member states will pledge.

-- Norway: Either Minister or Deputy Minister of Development Cooperation.

-- Australia: Australian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, along with a rep from Australian MFA. Pledge: AUD 32 million over two years.

-- Sweden: Charge of Swedish Embassy in Sri Lanka, along with MFA division head for Asia. Pledge: USD 41 million (includes existing program).

-- UK: DFID Director Asia: USD 40 million over 3 years.

-- Netherlands: Dutch Ambassador to Sri Lanka.  
Pledge: 11 million Euros (existing program).

-- Germany: German Ambassador to Sri Lanka. Pledge: 13 million Euros (existing program).

-- ADB: Bank President. Pledge: USD 200 million (existing program; new funding under discussion).

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COMMENT  
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¶13. (C) Original expectations that Tokyo would be "big bang" for the peace process are down somewhat. This is mainly due to the fact that the LTTE, of late, has thrown a wrench into the process by pulling out of the talks and out of Tokyo. (Note: The latter decision could still be reversed, of course -- there are several days left until Tokyo takes place, but it seems very unlikely.) That said, per Moragoda's comments, there remains a widespread belief among Sri Lankans and among most of the donors, including the Japanese and the Norwegians, that the conference will provide crucial support for the underlying peace process, which continues apace and uninterrupted. Moreover, the fact that expectations have come down a bit is basically a net positive, as it is easier to surpass them in that case. Nonetheless, with GSL-LTTE relations in a trough, Tokyo is set to be seminal moment for the next stage of the peace process, especially as efforts are made to get it firmly back on track in the coming weeks and months.  
END COMMENT.

¶14. (U) Minimize considered.

WILLS